

/21 cont. /

854 including the men, excite his attention and try to make him laugh; they repeat phrases and words praising his baby efforts, they move a homemade toy in front of him, and praise his progress in talking or crawling or walking and endeavor to stop his crying by picking him up, crooning to him, or playing games with him.

. . .

551 The name. In La Guajira everyone has several names. It appears that originally these were two, but later, with the practice of Catholic baptism, the number increased to three, as follows: a) The individual's personal name which is never used by outsiders but only by the person's closest blood relatives. b) The nickname, which actually becomes his personal name as it substitutes for the latter in order to avoid its being used by outsiders, thus giving the bearer a name for practical purposes. This nickname may be derived from some physical or mental quality or defect, from a resemblance to some object, a difference from others, from some circumstance or special occurrence in his life -- for example, at his birth -- from a distortion of his Spanish name, or from an invention of a younger brother who called his older brother by a word of his own invention or the name of an article he is able to pronounce. Both the family and outsiders usually use this name. c) The Spanish name, given at the Catholic baptism, which takes a very secondary place because, if there is a nickname, it will be used in preference to this, which is only used when having dealings with a white or for legal matters. Frequently, the Spanish name becomes so mispronounced that it is mistaken for a nickname.

One could say that every child is given different names by his mother, father, and brothers until a time comes when one is generally accepted and adopted. Although some names may refer to special occurrences or have a literal translation, others are adopted merely for the sound effect even though their translation (if such is possible) may be repugnant (for example, orko, a girl's name, meaning "horse gall").

/21 cont./

551

The nickname is so generally used that when a personal name is mentioned, few people recall to whom it refers. However, they give their Spanish name to a white, trying to pronounce it properly. /22/

Linked with this question of names is the problem of the Indians who emigrate to the haciendas of Venezuela, where they receive a name and surname, generally that of the hacienda, the owner, or the manager. There they are registered with these names. Moreover, some of the bond servants and slaves when sold are given the name of the master and when freed keep this name, sometimes a foreign one, which later they pass on to their children if they marry in the Catholic church.

Magic is intimately connected with the name question (1).

1. See Aspectos de la Magia en la Guajira by Roberto Pineda Giraldo, for further information. Published in Revista del Instituto Etnológico Nacional, Vol. III, No. 1.

[689]

Following is a brief summary of this matter: The personal name must not be used by outsiders, and the breaking of this rule would occasion a compensation payment. At the death of a Guajiro, others of the same name change theirs, at least in the area of the habitual home of the dead man's relatives, in order to prevent that name being used in their presence, as this also would involve compensation payment. As a result of this prohibition, the same person at different times and places may have a different name by which he may be called, which can cause confusion.

The personal name is given, as mentioned above, by his parents or closest relatives. The same applies to the general Catholic or Guajiro name, according to the following rules: If the marriage is a Catholic one, the children are named by the father, whose surname is taken. The daughters are given the

/22 cont./

651 name of his mother or maternal grandmothers or favorite female cousins. Very rarely is the name of an ascendant in the direct male line given and rarer still that of a collateral female relative in this line. The name of a woman friend, however, is commonly used. For boys, the father gives his brothers' or uncles' names or one of his favorite Spanish names. If the marriage has been solemnized by the Guajiro rite, then the mother names the child, also choosing from among those of her ancestors, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts or of a female friend. She will occasionally accept a suggestion from a female relative or the priest who asks for a Catholic name for the child.

The nickname also originates in the family, as already explained, and it is by this one that the person is identified. At the time of reaching puberty, women try to put aside the name they received when they were children, and their relatives also start dropping it, in order to call them by the one they receive at the initiation. Men, however, generally keep their name unchanged all through life. It appears that the girl, once changed into womanhood by the rite of passage of her initiation, /23/ must not be called by the nicknames she had when she was little, because they are a reminder of her age of immaturity from which she takes leave via each and all of the diverse magic experiences through which she passes, to be reborn (if one may use the word) into a new life and thus enter the world of adults with its corresponding rights and duties. Probably this is the reason why, if the childish nickname should somehow be retained, when they are questioned by a white person, they do not give their name or refuse to answer when thus addressed. However, some girls have common nicknames, but we were able to prove that these dated from after their initiation and refer to some physical characteristic, to a distortion of their name, etc. These names they will tell quite naturally to whoever asks what they are called, never refusing to answer when addressed by this name. Also, in this rests the fact that men generally receive more nicknames than women. The case may be presented that nicknames vary

/23 cont. /

- 651 chronologically because of things that happen or because an alteration in appearance gives rise to such a change, which supplant the former one.

857 Games. On general lines, the play /lúdicas/ activities in which children take part are in direct relation to the division of 462 labor by sex. Thus, it is strictly forbidden for them to amuse themselves in games which in real life do not correspond to their sex. Boys, for instance, are not allowed to play with dolls or to cook, and girls must not practice archery. The father will openly oppose and invoke all his authority in the small family, to keep his sons, even in play, from doing girl's work. This sense of the division of work which controls their games causes the child, alone or backed up by the influence of his father and of his maternal uncles, to refuse to do anything which does not correspond to the activities of his sex, as it is believed that games or pastimes different from those traditionally established for each sex create a liking for, or a tendency toward, the work of the opposite sex. The Guajiro wants his men to have all the accepted masculine attributes, and his women to be wholly feminine. One of the ways of violating this ideal is shown by intervening in activities of the other sex, either in play when children or in work when adult. Thus, the father will say to the little girl, "You are not to practice archery. Are you a tomboy that you should do such a thing?" And the woman who works on harnesses for animals they also consider very mannish and lowered in her standing as a woman.

Children -- both male and female -- in La Guajira take part in two kinds of play lúdicas: games properly so called and pastimes /24/ which serve as an apprenticeship and training for their work as adults.

- 524 Among the first and as a pursuit for boys, one may include games with ropes which, although they do develop manual quick-ness and ability, are not played for this purpose. These games are practiced either alone or in a group. In the former case, the object is to gain command of the technique and to learn to

/84 cont./

583 and offers them hospitality in his own house. The small bull, the best of the herd, serves to make a special dish and is also divided among those who have come so that each takes with him a good portion, /85/ the higher the guest's standing the better the piece. In the afternoon they return home. If they come to make the payment in the evening, then the attentions are different. They must have a great quantity of chicha made of masticated corn and yucca, which is accompanied by pieces of meat and bollos /corn rolls/. The bridegroom's companions sleep in the bride's house and leave at dawn after breakfast, for which an animal is slaughtered, the meat of which is distributed among the visitors.

[208] In the first case when women attend, they must each be presented with the gift of a goat or a sheep to take home with them; in both cases there must be an abundant quantity of rum for the men.

The bridegroom does not come at this time either, but when he wants to make the girl his wife, he brings more cattle (ten cows when the girl is of high standing), which he hands over to the mother in payment for the matrimonial hammock; with this payment he has fulfilled the final requirements for access to his bride, who awaits him in a neighboring house, and there they hang up their matrimonial hammock, which serves them as a marriage bed.

Sociological significance of the marriage payment. Through the payment the matrimonial tie is strengthened and its legal organization is passed on to the descendants of the new family cell. Thus the laws of inheritance are structured by it: The man [428] pays for his wife with the co-operation of his relatives, and for this reason the children, who belong to the mother's blood, are deprived of the right to inherit the father's goods at his death, because they are not consanguineous relatives, and, moreover, the mother and her maternal relatives received the purchase price. The children take the surname of their mother, a further [551] proof of their bond with the maternal clan, in which they find all the economic and social backing they need.

/156 cont. /

764 fixed in her ears suspended in a chain, starting with those of her greatest preference; all her necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and rings must be placed on the corresponding part of her body. If the deceased is a man, they also put on his jewelry, as his spirit will need them in the other life to maintain his status beyond the grave. If he belonged to the rich class, he is shrouded in the following manner: First, they cover his head with a special cloth woven by his wives; the bottom of the cloth covers his face, and the ends are fixed behind his head. Over this is placed a second cloth which reaches down to the belt and pins the arms laterally along the body. A third cloth covers the legs, and a fourth may be added to wrap the whole body, but the use of this latter has been gradually disappearing. Thus enshrouded, he is put in the enramada /bough-covered shelter/ within the coffin [17] -- modern custom -- or enveloped in a still fresh hide and placed in a hammock. Then the lamentations begin.

764 The custom exists of sending to all the absent consanguineous relatives, the most intimate friends, and in general all acquaintances, word of the death or of the patient's being near death, as the illness is made known from the first moment, especially to close relatives. If they are important people, runners are sent as soon as the sick man worsens, so that at the time of his death, the house is already full of people. As those who arrive to show their sympathy are so many and they appreciate how impossible it is for the master and mistress of the house to offer them all adequate hospitality, the visitors arrive with their hammocks, water in large pitchers, food, etc., which they bring on their burros.

764 The messenger sent with the news, especially when he carries it to a consanguineous relative of the deceased, knows that he must not pronounce the dead man's name, as this would gravely offend his relatives. For that reason he usually says: [20] "That relative of yours who lived in such-and-such a place, who did such-and-such an important thing, has died." Furthermore, none of those attending /the funeral ceremonies/ will pronounce

/156 cont./

764
551 the name of the dead man in front of anyone, again for fear of offending his relatives, /157/ who, although they may not be present, might be informed by someone looking for payment for talebearing.

764
152 One by one as the persons notified arrive, they express their sympathy. The form of doing so is as follows: The /dead man's/ kinsmen are seated on the ground, or nowadays more
[178] generally in the interior of the house (the new customs require the female relatives to remain inside the house seated on the floor, with their faces covered with a large cloth black like the robe they wear). When the outsider arrives he sits down beside them. Then begins the lamentation of the mourner, who mourns with his head bent forward, covered, as is his face. He cries for a more or less prolonged time, interspersing his weeping with short phrases which refer to his sorrow and his loss. He ends his lament, which is taken up by the visitor, and once he has finished they give the traditional Guajiro salutation, initiated by the mourner. They all begin to cry again in chorus, which they suspend to recount the process of the man's death in all its details.

Around the corpse are slung a series of hammocks at graded heights, which are occupied by the closest women relatives as they take turns in the weeping or by a newly arrived one, who, after expressing her sorrow to the family, must weep near the corpse, bending forward over the coffin and placing a hand on it, a magic action which will help her to dream of the deceased. In this position, the visitor, whether outsider or consanguineous relative, weeps in that tone and manner characteristic of the culture, which rather than weeping is like an intoned, melancholy complaint. The Guajiro men weep in a different manner, giving shouts of despair at intervals, without any definite timing. They do this standing up, bending over the coffin and covering their faces with a cloth, a hat, or a hand. On asking some outsiders, participants at a wake, how they were able to cry so intensely and realistically, they explained

/174 cont. /

614 personal property are marked with letters, especially such items
422 as clay and gourd vessels and parts of the harness of riding
animals and their hammocks /chinchorros and hamacas/.

614 3. Naming. According to mythology, every clan had its
551 personal name given to it by Mareiwa directly or was inspired
by him. It covers all the individuals belonging to the same
clan and is the indication of blood relationship. Clan disinte-
gration at the present time has made it necessary to add to this
generic name the name of the locality and the name of the
most outstanding family head (cacique).

At the present time a Guajiro individual feels that in spite
of being linked to another by an identical name he is not a
relative /of that person/, and he makes a distinction within the
same clan of diverse groups with more or less prestige. How-
ever, at a time when attacked by another group, they may
make /175/ common cause if their co-operation is needed.

[797] Furthermore, the introduction of the Catholic marriage has
given equal value to naming by using the paternal surname
followed by the maternal surname, although in a stage of tran-
sition the second of these has greater value.

• • •

614 4. Consanguinity. Consanguinity plays an important role
602 in the Guajiro concept of kinship, which embraces all indi-
viduals joined in a chain through common female ascendants,
that is, uterine kinship. In this way they set aside the paternal
branch, which may be found in opposition and enmity, because
in the Guajiro mentality the father-son biological bond, al-
though it exists, does not count in determining kinship. The
common tie that embraces all the individuals of a clan is the
mother's blood in the biological act and in the process of
gestation. From this premise the Guajiro derives the importance
of the spilling of blood through themselves or outsiders, because
it represents the destruction of the kinship tie and of the vital
element. This valuation is the outstanding concept in the
regimen for social stability in the culture.

Other Aspects of Magic

- 551 689 The name in magic. "The prohibition against uttering a dead person's name generally is quite rigidly obeyed. Certain South American tribes consider that to pronounce the name of a dead person in the presence of his living relatives is to inflict on them a serious offense, and they apply to the offender a penalty no less rigorous than that assigned to a murder . . . , " says Freud (63), and the Guajiro is typical in this respect. Let us see

63. Freud. Totem y Tabú.

one by one the rituals followed with respect to the dead person's name when a death occurs in their community.

- [553] It is imperative that every other person who bears the same name as the deceased should change it. This is done to avoid pronouncing that name in the presence of any of the dead man's relatives, because if this should happen the relatives are entitled to present a claim for compensation payment for the offense. The family considers that by mentioning the name of their deceased relative, the offender has renewed all the painful sorrow which they suffered at his death.

- 551 This change of names among those who are namesakes of a dead man is made for life and extends geographically over all the zone inhabited by the dead man's relatives and causes the same person at times to have different names. It is, at least, one of the reasons.

- [177] 797 At the present time it is common among the natives for every person to have three names: one Spanish, taken from the list of saints and given him by the priest at his baptism; a family nickname, by which he is generally known and which almost always refers to a distinctive physical or spiritual quality; and a third, intimate name, a secret for the majority of people and only known by its owner and some members of his family.

- [67] The personal name of the individual should never be pronounced by anyone but his close relatives. Whoever should

[109 cont.]

551 say his name and not be a close relative must pay a sum de-
[628] cided upon [110] as reparation for this violation of the social
norm. Usually they demand in payment the delivery of several
[628] head of livestock, necklaces, and other adornments. If the sum
agreed upon by the arbitrators is not paid in due time, war may
be provoked.

551 When a girl is born, the father gives her a name which
553 may be the same as her mother's, that of her maternal grand-
mother, or, secondarily, that of a favorite aunt or cousin, or
that of a much appreciated friend. But besides this name which
is derived from family sentiment or a friendship of the father's, the
girl will also have various capricious nicknames which do not
necessarily correspond to natural qualities or defects in her
psycho-physical personality or some special circumstance at her
birth but can be any arbitrary name which may occur to her
father, her mother, or her brothers [and sisters? hermanos] on
the spur of the moment. So the girl may grow up with several
nicknames, of which in the long run one will win out and be
generally adopted.

But when the girl becomes a young woman, when her first
menstruation appears and her complicated initiation ceremony
is carried out, the changes she experiences in her biological
functioning and her social standing also extend to the aspect of
her name, and she will no longer wish to respond to the nickname
by which she has been called ever since her infancy, but only to
her new name, by which she will be known until her death.

551 From the above we note that in La Guajira a person's
name is not used among the natives except in a very restricted
sense, but on the other hand, the nickname which a person
acquires when a child through the intervention of his parents
or brothers [siblings? hermanos], is the true, the universal name,
which may be used by all his countrymen up to the time of his
death.

787 Omens. When a mountain cat [cougar] cries repeatedly
825 throughout the night near the house and remains a long time
prowling about, it implies the approaching death of an inmate
of that house. The behavior of this animal can become maddening,
as at times it will repeat its patrolling and mewing for several

YEKUANA AND GOAJIRO KINSHIP

99

Twenty six fundamental kinship terms by which the Goajiro designate their relatives were recorded. Most terms are applied to more than one relative so that the system is classificatory in type. Among the Goajiro, kinship terms are almost exclusively used in reference, while in addressing a person teknonymy are employed, e.g.; *nāshi pīchī* - father of *pīchī* (*nī* - prefix, 3rd pers. singl. masc.; (*a*) *shi* - father; *pīchī* - *baciro*). The term corresponds to a male person who is the father of a boy child. This practice of teknonymy presupposes the presence of personal names. Either sex can be given a name in remembrance of an event which occurred on their birthday, e.g., "the one of the full moon," "the one of the blossoms of that tree," "the one of the war between . . .," etc. More frequently, however, personal names differ from each other by sex. Boys are called after strong and wild animals, such as *baciro* (*pīchī*), tiger (*karāira*), pig (*pīrikī*), wild cat (*mūāi*), while girls' names are ornamental and flattering, e.g., "brilliant one" (*hūrōtāi*), brownish one (*murāchong*), etc.

The teknonym employed to address a person is derived from the name of the eldest son, and in default of sons, from that of the eldest daughter. Personal names are used in addressing unmarried persons. It is a disgrace, however, for an adult not to have children. Grandparents may be called by a teknonym referring either to a son or to a grandchild.

Kinship terms are never employed in the forms as listed above, but only with possessive prefixes, e.g., *tashī* - my father; *pīshī* - your father; *nāshī* - his father; *āshī* - her father; *washī* - our father; *hashī* - your (pl.) father; *nashī* - their father. In the table, kinship terms are represented by their root forms. As a friendly gesture, people may address each other by general terms such as "brother," "sister," etc., or they may call any small child "son" or "grandchild."

Of particular interest is the distinction the Goajiro make between "blood-relatives" and "flesh-relatives." Blood-relatives are all patrilineally related persons, whereas "flesh-relatives" are related to Ego through the mother's line. Kinship ties between flesh-relatives are considered to be stronger than those existing between blood-relatives. In practical life this would mean that Ego would have to help his maternal uncle in a fight against his own father. Among all kinsmen the maternal uncle possesses the greatest authority and his word counts most in all domestic affairs. Frequently, therefore, we find the extended family clustered around the homestead of the maternal uncle, which makes the Goajiro a matrilineal avunculocal society. Otherwise residence is matrilocal. Any one of the three *arū*-relatives (maternal uncle), as listed in the table above, may replace the true maternal uncle in case of his death. But only his sister's children can be heirs of his possessions (including his wife or wives).

611 In the following laws it must be borne in mind that it is not the
614 injured individual that demands compensation, but his relations, unless
628 on the mother's side as a rule. From this has arisen the common error
[604] that the father is ignored; as will be soon further on, this is not the
case. In compensation it is the caste that reclaims, and the caste is
always the mother's side. For example, a Pushaina man marries an
Urianas girl; the children are Urianas. If one of these now should kill
an Epieyu, for example, the whole caste of Urianas is at war with all the
Epieyucs, unless the matter is amicably settled by paying blood-money.

672 Case No. 1. Personally inflicted wounds. If an Indian accidentally
683 cuts himself, say with his own knife, breaks a limb, or otherwise does him-
self an injury, his family on the mother's side immediately demands blood-
money. Being of their blood, he is not allowed to spill it without paying
for it. The father's relations demand tear-money, not so much. Friends
[572] present demand compensation to repay their sorrow at seeing a friend in
pain. If anybody present can seize the instrument that caused the
accident it is appropriated. The pay is in ratio to the injury. A slightly
cut finger is settled with a little Indian corn, a kid, or such trifle. A
bad cut requires at least a goat or a sheep, with other sundries. In all
cases of compensation where the Indian has not the wherewith to satisfy
his creditors, he goes round begging until it is obtained.

628 Case No. 2. Damage done by animals. Suppose an Indian borrows a
672 mule or other animal, and is thrown by it, doing himself bodily injury,
683 then his relations demand compensation from the lender, the argument
being, had he not lent the animal the accident could not have happened.
Should the beast belong to the thrown man himself, then he has to pay.
Case of No. 1 in fact.

Case No. 3. General liability all round. This covers an enormous
field. The most curious. Everybody selling rum or anything else is
answerable for all the damage done by its instrumentality. Unfortunately
this law is only, like many others, enforced when it is possible. As the
traders know it very well, they never take rum into the interior for
barter without being fully able to protect themselves. I was lent a
servant as guide by a trader, who requested me not to let the man have
any drink, for should anything happen to him he would be responsible
to the family. Indians in employment receiving any damage the em-
[466] ployer becomes liable; and so on. Wherever the Indian can only make
the ghost of a claim he wants tear-money, blood-money, or some other
money, and if not satisfied, helps himself with what he can lay his
hands on.

551 Case No. 4. Mentioning names. This is very serious. The Indians
628 object to have their true names mentioned, and demand heavy com-
689 pensation in aggravated cases. They generally go by a Spanish name—
José Antonio, Agustín, Vicente, &c., for an Indian dearly loves to be
baptised, that is, he likes the attending feast and having god-fathers on

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whom to exercise his begging propensities. To mention the dead before the relations is a dreadful offence, often punished by death; for if it happens in the dead person's rancho, with nephew or uncle present, they will assuredly kill the offender on the spot if possible. If not on the spur of the moment, it resolves itself into a heavy fine, usually two or more oxen. Even if none of the dead person's relations are present, any friend can carry the news to the relations, and compensation is at once required. When not given it is forcibly taken, probably resented, and the two castes are at war. It is not wise to mention names of any sort in the Goajira in mixed company.

Another peculiar case: if a child dies in the custody of the mother or father, and they are living separate at the time of its death, then tear-money has to be paid by the one, under whose care the child died, to the other. This is "Taguira suchirus tachón," "My tears on account of my child." To demand payment for debts, *achekaka*, is one thing, and to demand compensation, *manga*, is another. They are generally pretty punctual in paying debts; should the debtor die, the creditor is secure, for the relations will suffer anything rather than allow the name of their dead to be abused. The following case of murder I witnessed in Ataipe. Some Pnahinas drinking, one got on to a strange horse, and was ordered off by the owner, on not complying he was shot dead. Both parties being poor and near relations, it was arranged as follows: First payment, eight sheep, two oxen, one horse, two necklaces of cornelian beads, two sirapos of black beads (about 16 lbs.). Six months afterwards, second payment, similar to first. A few months after a third payment is asked, but is more an extra than anything else. After second payment all animosity ceases, and the two families can look again at each other on meeting. Should an Indian in attempting to kill another be wounded or killed, his family demand the same as though no attempt were made.

Among domestic customs, the one that calls most attention is shutting up their young girls on arriving at womanhood. The custom is religiously carried out throughout the country. Each girl is enclosed in a separate little hut by herself. She is stripped of all her ornaments, even to her beads and sirapo, and all her clothing with the exception of the long loose cotton gown, nor is she allowed to cut her hair. For the first couple of days, drinking water is denied her, the only food being *haguape*, a composition of medicinal herbs. According to birth, a rigorous diet is observed the first month, no meat being allowed. She can be freely mentioned and is merely alluded to by her relations as "surtine suru paura," "she is shut up in her house." The term of retirement varies according to the wealth and rank of her family. Poor people cannot afford to keep girls idle more than a couple of weeks or a month; whereas the rich enclose them for one, two, or even four years. It is while in this state that she learns all women's requirements.

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demetery, a site chosen in some solitary arid spot, and surrounded by walls of cacti. At the death of Salvador, a Pushaina from Arroyo Cardon, 120 fat oxen were killed, and the hides did not pay for the liquor drunk. Two of the same family meeting for the first time after the death of a relation, must squat down on their hands in front of each other, and sob and weep, for at least a quarter of an hour, the louder the better.

The Indians are very punctilious in saluting. Calling at a rancho, visitors must wait until spoken to, if this is not done soon, it is evident they are not welcome, so ride away. The words used never seem to be the same. The most frequent are "Intiahi-pia" (you have come), or "Elguare pia" (so you have arrived). In eating and drinking the Indians are extremely cleanly. The principals all eat separately; receiving their allowance in an earthenware dish, *posá*, with a gourd spoon, *pushi*. The remains, with an addition, serve for the lower members of the family. Water is invariably given after, to wash the mouth and fingers. Even if a drink of milk is taken, a little water is tendered after. As to their hospitality, it has, I believe, been rather exaggerated. There is no doubt that the Goajiro is more hospitable than the Arhuaco of the Sierra Nevada, but then he is also far more cunning and diplomatic, and his hospitality is a mere question of self-interest. He will willingly give a sheep or a goat as a present, provided there is a chance of claiming an ox in return. He is chivalrous in his donations. When he does give a sheep, it is a fat one, his best, and given whole, without reserve, skin and all. If eating, on the arrival of a stranger, he may offer food to him, but certainly will give if requested, as is the custom, always begging. One thing a guest may rely upon receiving in a rancho is a hammock, even if the owner has to sleep on the ground. Lastly, among curious customs, is that of parents assuming the names of their children with the prefix *nushi* or *sushi* if the father, and *si* or *si* if the mother. Thus the father of Juan would call himself "Nushijuan," or if a daughter, "Sushijuana." The mother of Juan would be called "Nijuan," and if a daughter, "Sijuana."

The dress of the Goajiros is extremely simple, and probably similar to his savage luxury of three centuries ago, when Alfingor devastated the land, except that his own quiet blacks and browns—for he is cunning in the art of dyeing—have given way to the gorgeous blues, reds, and yellows of European wool. His every day working costume is simply a strip of cloth from three inches wide upwards, called *caichea*. When paying visits, receiving company, or travelling, he dons his best—a large loincloth with many folds, and the home-woven mantle *shí*, with a magnificent sash, *si-ira*. The mantle is managed with wonderful elegance, now letting it fall about him in voluptuous folds, or dropping it from his shoulders, and tucking it into his immense sash, where his arrows are carried. The hair, which is jet black, thick, and cut short, is kept back in a very æsthetic style by a ring or crown,

CHAPTER 4

Towards a Mirage

OUR donkey caravan tripped along between the sand dunes at a gentle trot. The sun poured what the Indians call its molten gold over us in fierce waves. The donkeys were slow, but our riding-mules were fresh and even tried a trick or two, throwing our photographer, who was no expert, into a cactus bush. That was a pity, for the spikes were as long as knitting needles and unpleasantly hard and sharp. The Indians laughed heartlessly. It was perhaps the only amusing thing that happened to them on the whole trip. 821

We had no idea what our men were called. As I have already mentioned, the Indians' first names are secret. They always say: 'I have no name' or 'Call me what you like'. Your name is part of your personality. You cannot surrender it to strangers. If you know another's name, you can acquire a certain hold over him, just as you can harm him, if you had some of his hairs or nail-clippings with which to work magic. The family name, that of the clan, is naturally public. White people usually give Spanish names to the Indians with whom they have to deal, and there are plenty of Juans and Josés in the peninsula now. Usually, however, you give a nickname to the Indians you have temporarily in your service, just as they give their employers nicknames. We discovered that they had christened our photographer 'The Red One'. He was not red-headed at all, but very fair, and because of that, his face was always highly coloured in the heat. I could not get out of them what they called my wife and me. I suppose they thought that we would be offended or regard it as insubordination. They had been 551 ●

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told that among my own people I was a sort of medicine-man and chief combined.

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Nowadays most of the Indians in Guajira acquire three first names: a Spanish one that the white men give them, a nickname, and their true, Indian name, which is secret except to members of their immediate family. When a girl is born, her father names her after her mother or some near female relative, but for everyday use she has a pet name which is only dropped when she reaches marriageable age. She then acquires a new name, which she keeps for the rest of her life.

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The Creoles called those in the border areas who were not Indians '*gente*', or just 'people'. They could scarcely be called white, for many were as good as pure black, being the descendants of former slaves. When they told us in Rio Hacha that there were not any 'people' living in this or that village, they meant that there were none but Indians there. Those who were not Indians, that is those who wore trousers, also called themselves '*civilizados*', while the Indians called them *arijuna*.

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We called our two old Indians Gaffer and Gammer, and the youngest 'The Lad'. We liked The Lad especially. He was strong, merry and did the work of two. The fourth, who, strangely enough, had a crew cut and was supposed to be our interpreter, we called 'Bristles', and he learned to answer to that. He knew a little Spanish, but as an interpreter he was no use. When the Gaffer had been talking to us for a long time and we asked Bristles what he had said, the answer always was: 'Nothing'. Perhaps that was what the other's talk amounted to, but we should have preferred to have judged that for ourselves. We noticed, too, that if we had to scold the Gaffer, Bristles did not dare repeat what we said. With gestures and the few Guajiro words we knew we could make Gaffer realize that we were annoyed with him, but not always why.

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The men wore nothing but the usual piece of cloth and belt, the *nircte*, or, in Spanish, guayuco, which really means crupper, and sandals to protect their feet from the cactus spikes lying on the ground, but the Gammer was enveloped

[22] our cameras up, when a plump, middle-aged Indian came rushing up and began giving the fencers orders in a stern voice. He had not noticed us.

'That's Mauana,' Francisco whispered respectfully.

[29] Mauana was wearing only a guayuco and brow-band, which is the genuine Guajiro garb. When he saw us, he at once spoke to us in good Spanish, which not all the chiefs know, for the Guajiro cling stubbornly to their own tongue. [19] Mauana, of course, had heard of us. He now invited us to go with him and see how he lived.

[24] First, we came to his plantations, which many in the peninsula must have envied him. There was a green valley, one of the oases in the semi-desert, where manioc, sugarcane and maize grew, shaded by coconut palms, mango trees and bananas. The plots were watered by narrow canals [31] which all came from the one stream in Guajira that never ran dry.

[62] Mauana was obviously a strict master and he ordered his slaves about like a sergeant-major, but his plantation was a model one and he was an efficient chief who maintained order in a most commendable way. Once or twice he had caught white criminals who had hidden in the hills there and sent them back to the authorities—to their great disappointment. He lived simply, as all Guajiro do, but he had an unusually well-built house that was completely roofed.

We told Mauana of the purchi we had seen, and he used this as an excuse to give us a lesson in Indian law. Such an account of the Indians' social order and laws was both amusing and interesting, and it showed how different from ours the primitive's conception of justice can be. One knows all too well what mistakes colonial authorities have made through misunderstanding the native conception of these matters, especially of the rights of ownership.

[64] The Indians, as has already been said, are divided into clans in which relationship follows the female line. Children thus take their mothers' names. Their fathers belong to a different clan and strictly speaking are not related to them. [55] It is their eldest maternal uncle who is their head and [60] guardian, and it is from him, not from their father, that they

LAWS WITH NO TABLETS

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4 goats, 3 pigs, 15 hens, 25 skeins of yarn, 5 bars of soap (an expensive commodity) and some mirrors and handkerchiefs. Employees are very well insured, it would seem. If an employee destroys anything belonging to a third party, the employer has to pay twice its value or more. One's responsibility is not confined to what persons in one's service may do, but extends to animals and inanimate objects if one lends them. If I let an Indian ride my horse and the horse throws him off, I have to pay; and if someone cuts himself on a knife belonging to me, I have to pay—for it was my knife that did it. 672

It can even be risky to give advice in Guajira: for if you suggest a course of action and things go wrong, you may have to pay compensation. That is why the Indians will seldom tell you the way when you ask it.

A host is responsible to his guests, even if they are self-invited. Hospitality is sacred and one cannot refuse to receive someone seeking shelter. If the guest is ill, the host looks after him as best he can, but immediately sends for one of his relations. As soon as a relative arrives the host's responsibilities cease, but if the guest should die before the relative gets there, the host is liable for damages, hard as it may seem. On the other hand, if a person suffering from an infectious disease goes to someone else's house, it is the guest who is responsible and must pay his host damages. 672 574

If two guests start fighting the host is considered jointly responsible, for if he had not invited them there would never have been a fight. If the others present do not try to avert the quarrel, they must pay up too.

Insults and calumny are contrary to the law, and it is especially serious if one reviles another's mother's family. Among themselves the Indians consider it disparaging to be addressed in Spanish, instead of in their mother tongue. 683 [578]

Every Indian has a personal name used only by his nearest and dearest. For an outsider to pronounce this calls for a heavy penalty, as it does to speak the name of someone dead. As soon as it is learned that someone has died, all those with the same name at once change it for another. The 551 683

- 551 idea being that to speak the name renews the grief of the
683 dead person's relatives. An old man of the Uriana clan, who called himself Juan, died. Some time later some of his relatives were at an entertainment, at which too was a woman of the Jusuá clan with her little son. A Creole asked this woman what her little boy was called and without thinking, she replied: 'Juan'. The dead man's relatives then claimed damages because she had mentioned the dead man's name, and she had to pay them a bullock, even though it was a Spanish name. It was the reminder of their grief that had [564] to be compensated. It is also an offence to tread on an Indian's grave.

- 683 It is more expensive to strike a person than to insult him. One should not answer an insult with a blow, but a well-to-do Indian will not infrequently do so and gladly pay the damages. If an Indian strikes another without hurting him, he must pay nonetheless, because he has treated the other as a slave—it being only one's own slaves that one has the right to strike. If anyone tears a tunic, he must not only 685 replace it, but pay for the shame the other felt at going about in rags.

A thief, if caught, must repay several times the value of what he has stolen. Not infrequently he must pay with his life, especially if the person he has robbed is a powerful personage, as he usually is, and the thief belongs to a weak clan that cannot help his family to exact blood-money.

- [567] A thief can be forced to pay by working for his victim. He becomes a debtor-slave. Murder, manslaughter and being 682 the cause of another's death are the most serious crimes. They do not have these actual categories. The penalty for manslaughter is very heavy; if agreement cannot be reached on it, it can sometimes lead to war, a war in which the enemy must either be exterminated or enslaved.

- 628 It is on such occasions that a purchi is held, at which you can see the groups of warriors drawn up facing each other, while a chief presides.

- 622 The chief is a mighty person and will have been chosen
623 for his excellent qualities, yet he is not a judge, but rather advocate and mediator. His role is as conciliator. He will

726 on equal terms. He then approached the enemy from the left while making quick movements, jumps, and turns, with his legs apart and his knees bent. More recently, according to Ernst (1887 c), war is not declared, attempts being made to take the enemy by surprise.

[797] Wars last indefinitely, sometimes being broken by a peace brought about by an influential "civilizado" or the Capuchin monks, the latter sometimes paying the retribution demanded out of their own pockets.

579 Some tribes, such as the *Cosino* of Serranía Cosina (actually a conglomeration of outcastes rather than a sib), make their living almost entirely by robbery and pillage, destroying houses, stealing cattle, and killing or enslaving their enemies.

LIFE CYCLE

843 Birth and childhood.—During pregnancy a woman continues to do her heavy work up to the very hour of delivery. At childbirth, the shaman

844 pronounces various spells over the patient and applies poultices made of
[157] dried flowers, roots, etc. A large, heavy stone placed over the womb and vigorous massaging bring about the birth. If the placenta is not soon expelled, the woman drinks a medicine concocted by the medicine man.

As soon as the child is safely delivered the father serves rum and chicha
[484] to all his relatives. If the pains of childbirth appear when the sib is on the march, the woman mounts and rides ahead so that when the sib catches up the event is practically over. The husband cuts the cord with his machete and cauterizes its ends with a glowing ember. The woman

[854] then continues on the march with the child in a sling on her back. When the permanent camp is reached she washes herself and the child.

851 Baptism is a Christian ceremony which the *Goajiro* have adopted, and
● 531 most of the Indians are called by Spanish names, as their real names may
177 not be mentioned. Teknonymy is practiced; a parent is addressed by its child's name plus a prefix, *nushi* or *suahi* for the father, *ni* or *si* for the mother. Thus, a father may be called *Nushijuan* after a son or *Sushijuana* after a daughter.

857 At 6 or 7, girls learn to grind salt, pick cotton, and tend the smaller
868 animals; the boys imitate their fathers.

855 Parents are said to show little affection for their children, sometimes
[435] selling them at Sinamaica. They receive \$10 or \$15 for a child of 8 or 9 years. The purchaser becomes the child's guardian, teaches him the Catholic faith, and keeps him until he is 17 years old. These children

[536] rarely return home. Abandoned children are taken to the San Antonio
797 orphanage, where the girls continue to wear their *Goajiro* dress, but the boys are put into jackets and pants.

881 Girls' puberty.—At her first menstruation a girl is isolated in a small dark hut and stripped of all her ornaments. She lies in a hammock, sometimes hoisted near the roof. For the first 2 days she drinks no

The *Goajiro* believe that after death the deceased in ethereal form ⁷⁷⁵ wander about the country, their favorite meeting place being in the vicinity of Bahía Honda in the extreme north of the peninsula. There is some evidence that the Indians look forward to a happier existence after death. From this belief in the afterlife stems the practice of mutilating the body of a slain enemy, for once his body is broken and scattered it is not possible to reassemble his soul, and the slayer is protected from a vengeance-seeking spirit.

The dead are highly respected or feared; consequently, it is a serious ⁷⁶⁹ offense to mention a dead person by name. ⁵⁵¹

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Games.—The *Goajiro* have various athletic sports, such as horse racing, ⁵²⁶ wrestling, and archery. Contestants shoot at a skin ball or a fruit tossed into the air or at targets; they are very accurate up to 125 yards. Tournaments are held in which the contestants pair off, the victor of each round winning an arrow and continuing to compete.

Feasts and dances.—The *Goajiro* are fond of feasts and hold them ⁵⁷⁴ whenever opportunity offers—at funerals, when they have received their ⁷⁵⁶ pay for loading salt, at baptisms, or when a person completes his training as a medicine man. Weston (1937) describes a festival held on the last-mentioned occasion. For 2 days the big drum was sounded by relays of players, spreading the news. The dance, practiced beforehand, took place in a circle some 25 feet (7.5 m.) in diameter around which some 200 Indians gathered. A man, nude except for his waist cloth and head band ⁷²² with ornamental plume, with his face painted red in a crisscross pattern, ⁵³⁵ danced backward from a girl dressed in a voluminous robe and wearing a large red handkerchief on her head. The girl attempted to overtake and head off the man, who retreated before her in a circle with a peculiar double step, almost a hop and a skip. As one pair tired another took its place, the dance continuing indefinitely.

Musical instruments.—*Goajiro* musical instruments are few. A ⁵³⁴ calabash filled with stones or peas serves as a rattle for dance accompaniment. The clarinet is about 2 feet (0.6 m.) long, made of telescoped (?) sections of reed with a bell consisting of calabash and a vibrating reed in the mouthpiece. It is side blown. The large drum is carved from a hollow section of tree, 15 inches (38 cm.) in diameter and 24 inches (60 cm.) long, and has both ends covered with sheepskin. It is slung from the rafters, a branch, or from the player's neck. Singing among the *Goajiro* is virtually nonexistent.

Narcotics and stimulants.—To make chicha beer, maize may be mas- ²⁷³ ticated by the women and spat into a large earthenware bowl, with water and crude sugar added. After 3 days it is strained and drunk. By another

ACQUIRING STATUS IN GUAJIRO SOCIETY 121

there may be other traditional ways of acquiring status. The literature mentions none, although Ernst (1887), Jahn (1927), and Hernandez de Alba (1936) make detailed comments on the two traditional ways described here. 554

Incidentally, these two leaders are never called by their first names, not even by their closest relatives, and are referred to as To'olito Silva and To'olito Fernandez. 551 ● 622

To illustrate the new way of acquiring status in Guajiro society it is best to describe quite fully how one individual, and as far as the writer knows, the only one, whom we shall name José Perez, has reached a certain status though employing none of the traditional methods. As guide and interpreter of the present writer during the recent field trip, José Perez was in constant personal contact with the author, who was able to obtain valuable first hand information and observe reactions to personal and intimate questions. 159 554

First let us give a brief biographical sketch of José Perez. Perez is now 46 years old. He was born in the village of Castilletes, Venezuela, in the extreme north-eastern part of the Guajiro peninsula. His father (still living, now in the town of Paraguaipoa, Venezuela) has no trace of Indian blood and is considered in Paraguaipoa as pure white, while his mother (deceased) was a pure Indian belonging to the Uriana Clan. Perez's father took him, while still a child, to Maracaibo for schooling which included three years of high school. At that time Perez's father was quite influential in local politics in Maracaibo and was able to get the Governor of the State of Zulia interested in the youth. Perez was given a small position in the State's government, where he was employed for about ten years. During this period he married a local white girl with whom he had a child (now in his fifth year of medical college, State University of Zulia) and apparently had all but forgotten the Indian half of his heritage settling into the whites' ways of life.

Perez went into politics and was elected Prefect (an office similar to the County Sheriff in the United States) of the Paez district, Sinamaica, in the threshold of the Guajira, so to speak. He moved north to his district leaving his family in Maracaibo. This return to a semi-Indian district apparently had some influence in Perez's outlook for the future, for as soon as his term of